

At page 45, line 23, replace "AD.4)" with --AD.4;--.

At page 50, line 7, replace "FEL.DEF" with --REL.DEF--.

At page 50, line 10, replace "REF.DEF" with --REL.DEF--.

At page 53, line 9, replace "entity. (i.e." with --entity
(i.e.--.

At page 55, line 1, replace "applicationprogram" with
--application program--.

At page 57, line 9, replace "question,?.??" with
--question, ?.??--.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 1-14 without prejudice.

Please add the following new claims:

~~15~~. A method for retrieving a desired entity of a desired entity type from a relational database, wherein said desired entity is related to a provided entity by a provided relation type associating an entity type of said provided entity with said desired entity type, said method comprising:

- retrieving a specific relation type record defining said provided relation type from a relation definition table;
- retrieving a specific relation instance record defining a relation of said provided relation type between said provided entity and said desired entity from a relation instance table corresponding to said specific relation type record;
- retrieving a desired entity type record containing said desired entity type from an entity definition table, wherein said desired entity type record specifies a desired entity instance table associated with said desired entity type; and
- retrieving said desired entity from said desired entity instance table.

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2~~16~~. The method of claim ~~15~~¹, wherein said relation instance record specifies said desired entity by said desired entity type and a desired record identifier.

3~~17~~. The method of claim ~~16~~², wherein said desired entity is identified by said desired record identifier in said desired entity instance table.

4~~18~~. The method of claim ~~15~~¹, wherein said retrieving a specific relation type record defining said provided relation type from a relation definition table comprises:

retrieving a table identifier for said relation instance table from said specific relation type record;
and

retrieving said specific relation instance record from said relation instance table based on said specific relation type record and said provided entity.

5~~19~~. The method of claim ~~15~~¹, further comprising retrieving data specifying said provided relation type from an inquiry table.

6~~20~~. The method of claim ~~15~~¹, further comprising retrieving data specifying said provided entity from an inquiry table.

7~~21~~. The method of claim ~~15~~¹, further comprising retrieving a second desired entity type record containing a second desired entity type from said entity definition table, wherein said second desired entity type record specifies a second desired entity instance table associated with said second desired entity type.

8~~22~~. The method of claim ~~21~~⁷, further comprising retrieving a third desired entity type record containing a third desired

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entity type from said entity definition table, wherein said third desired entity type record specifies a third desired entity instance table associated with said third desired entity type.

⁹~~23~~. The method of claim ¹~~18~~, further comprising retrieving a second specific relation instance record defining a second relation of said provided relation type between said provided entity and said desired entity from a second relation instance table corresponding to said second specific relation type record.

¹⁰~~24~~. A relational database processing system comprising:
 an entity definition table containing a first entity type record defining a first entity type;
 an first entity instance table associated with said first entity type;
 a plurality of entity instance records stored in said first entity instance table;
 a relation definition table containing a first relation type record defining a provided relation type;
 a first relation instance table associated with said provided relation type; and
 a first relation instance record of said provided relation type, said first relation instance record relating a desired entity in one of said entity instance records to a provided entity.

¹¹~~25~~. The relational database processing system of claim ¹⁰~~24~~, wherein each of said entity instance records is identified by a record identifier.

¹²~~26~~. The relational database processing system of claim ¹⁰~~24~~, wherein said first relation contains a desired record

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identifier and a desired entity type corresponding to a desired entity instance record containing said desired entity.

¹³
~~21~~ 10. The relational database processing system of claim ~~24~~, wherein said first relation type record comprises a table identifier identifying said first relation instance table.

¹⁴
~~24~~ 10. The relational database processing system of claim ~~24~~, further comprising an inquiry table containing an inquiry record, wherein said inquiry record specifies said provided relation type and said provided entity.

¹⁵
~~28~~ 10. The relational database processing system of claim ~~24~~ further comprising:

a second entity instance table associated with a second entity type; and

wherein said entity definition table contains a second entity type record containing said second entity type and associating said second entity instance table with said second entity type.

¹⁶
~~28~~ 10. The relational database processing system of claim ~~29~~ further comprising:

a third entity instance table associated with a third entity type; and

wherein said entity definition table contains a third entity type record containing said third entity type and associating said third entity instance table with said third entity type.

¹⁷
~~31~~ 10. The relational database processing system of claim ~~24~~ further comprising:

a second relation instance table associated with a second entity type; and

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